

CLAIMS

1. A method of making a standing gather-forming member having a basal wall and first and second overhangs on both sides of the basal wall, comprising:
 - 5 a first step of disposing at least one elastic member in the stretched state on the inner surface of a middle portion of a continuously running strip-shaped sheet along the longitudinal direction of the middle portion and Z-folding one of side portions extending on both longitudinal sides of the middle portion so as to cover a part of the width of the middle portion to form the first overhang and
 - 10 a second step of folding the other side portion inward along the longitudinal direction so as to cover the part of the middle portion that remains uncovered with the first-mentioned side portion and also overlay the Z-folded portion of the first-mentioned side portion to form the second overhang and the basal wall,
 - 15 the second step following the first step.
2. The method of making a standing gather-forming member according to claim 1, wherein the first and the second overhangs each have one or a plurality of the elastic members disposed in the stretched state, a part of the elastic members are disposed on the middle portion in the first step, and the rest of the elastic members are disposed on the middle portion in the second step.
 - 20 3. The method of making a standing gather-forming member according to claim 1, further comprising the step, after the first step and before the second step, of applying an adhesive to at least one of the side portions of the sheet to be superposed on each other in the second step.
 - 25 4. The method of making a standing gather-forming member according to claim 1, wherein the Z-folding of one of the side portions in the first step and the folding of the other side portion in the second step are each carried out while holding the middle portion by suction from the outer surface of the middle portion.
 5. The method of making a standing gather-forming member according to claim 1, wherein the sheet is conveyed while forming a level difference in the middle portion thereof.

6. The method of making a standing gather-forming member according to claim 1, wherein the elastic member is fixed by applying an adhesive thereto at intervals.

7. Apparatus for making a standing gather-forming member having a basal wall and first and second overhangs laterally extending from the basal wall,

5 the apparatus comprising a conveying system configured to convey along a conveying route a strip-shaped sheet having at least one elastic member disposed in the stretched state on the middle portion thereof, a first folding unit having a first guide provided on one side of the conveying route so as to narrow the width of the conveying route from that side, the first guide having an inwardly projecting projection configured to hang over a part of the middle portion on the conveying route, and a second folding unit having a second guide provided on the other side of the conveying route so as to narrow the width of the conveying route from the other side, the second guide having an inwardly projecting projection configured to hang over a part of the middle portion on the conveying route,

10 15 the projection of the first guide being configured to Z-fold one of side portions extending on both longitudinal sides of the middle portion such that the Z-folded side portion covers a part of the middle portion to form the first overhang, and

20 25 the projection of the second guide being configured to fold the other side portion inward along the longitudinal direction such that the other side portion covers the part of the middle portion that remains uncovered with the first-mentioned side portion and overlays the Z-folded portion of the first-mentioned side portion to form the second overhang and the basal wall.

8. The apparatus for making a standing gather-forming member according to claim 7, further comprising an adhesive applicator between the first guide and the second guide, the adhesive applicator being configured to apply an adhesive to at least one of the side portions being to be superposed on each other in the second folding unit.

9. The apparatus for making a standing gather-forming member according to claim 7, wherein the conveying system comprises air-permeable conveyor belts for conveying the sheet and suction mechanisms configured to attach the middle portion to the belts by suction in the first and the second folding units.

10. The apparatus for making a standing gather-forming member according to claim 7, wherein the conveying system is configured to convey the sheet while making a level difference in the middle portion.